1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 31 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of loop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

746 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into [534] a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624] with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626 with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276
793 the pipe stem and blow the smoke first upward and then downward, and after that would smoke like anyone else.

793 In general, religious and political life were closely interwoven in the Gros Ventre theocracy. "The Pipes [both the Flat and The ● 624 Feathered]," as The Boy expressed it, "seemed to hold the tribe together more or less." They were the most sacred and revered possessions of the tribe. The keepers were men of eminence, by virtue of their personal qualities and achievements as well as of their office. In view of these and other facts, it is to be expected that the keeper of the Flat Pipe played a role in Gros Ventre political life, a role however not shared except in a minimal degree [562] by the co-keeper, a woman in a man-dominated sphere of action. The keeper's role in Gros Ventre political life was fairly clearly defined and delimited. Here we shall summarize the main points.

When camp was to be moved, the decision as to time and destination was mainly in the hands of the head men, although the keeper would participate. In some cases, it seems, he might initiate the move by calling the head men together, usually at night. The whole decision was not ordinarily announced by the crier or criers. He would be sent around to notify the people that all would move camp the next morning. They by looking toward the keeper's lodge in the morning would learn the direction in which the camp would move, for the Flat Pipe bundle would be taken out of the lodge, to the north thereof, and hung on its tripod, with the stem end pointing in the agreed upon direction of the trek. On the trek itself, the co-worker with the bundle led the cavalcade.

When the bands scattered for the winter after the fall hunt and for the late spring after the first spring hunts, usually both the Flat and Feathered Pipes attracted a large following.

The keeper could be invited to sit in important council meetings, and to participate in elections and in decisions involving policy or action and had a certain veto prerogative thereon. He could, on occasions at least, intercede with considerable power, to resolve conflicts and avert bloodshed. He could accompany war-parties and might even have a voice in strategy and tactics, but he was not *ex officio* a fighter or war-leader. He could, as

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

previously mentioned, afford asylum in his lodge to criminals. All in all, he wielded very considerable influence in the political life of his people, but he was in no sense a dictator. 793 624

While a good many of the prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keeper and co-keeper ceased when their term of office ended, others automatically continued, beyond the period of keepership or, as regards restrictions, could be and often were voluntarily continued by the ex-keepers. Most of such cessations and continuances on which we obtained specific information have been explicitly or inexplicitly noted in the preceding pages.

Flat Pipe and Bundle: Description

The proper name of the Flat Pipe was θe:tsa. It was also called bä'ɔno (turtle), the turtle having played such an important role in the first making of dry land after the flood (for story see No. 3 in Appendix), and a turtle shell ranking next in dignity to the Flat Pipe itself in the Flat Pipe bundle. Bä'ɔno was used in an appealing, pleading or begging way. 778 276

The Flat Pipe bundle containing the Flat Pipe and other sacred objects could not be unwrapped and opened except on solemn ceremonial occasions and with the appropriate elaborate rites. The last such occasion was on February 6, 1946, when it was impossible for us to be present and when photographs taken turned out badly. Our description, therefore, of the Pipe and of the other contents of the bundle has to rest on detailed accounts given us by our various informants who had witnessed one or more openings, upon sketches of the Pipe drawn by The Boy in 1939, by Thomas Main in 1938 or 1939 (after an opening in 1938) and by a young high school student, Frank Cuts The Rope in 1946 (after the above 1946 opening), and upon dimensions given by Thomas Main (See fig. 1).

The Flat Pipe itself is of wood, in a perfect state of preservation, carved in one piece, light brown or almost tan in color, very smooth as if polished from long and frequent wrapping, and about 18½ inches long. The bowl is round, low or squat, and flaring, 3⅛ inches in diameter on top with the hole for the tobacco about ½ inch in diameter, 2½ inches in diameter at its

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

"You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper, as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder and storm being Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitč (it has feathers).

We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken, the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Dance.[5] Women could vow the Old Women's Dance, but no other Dance could be vowed by women of any age.

The vower would call upon his company or age-society to help him fulfill his vow. As elsewhere explained, when the young boy was about 15 to 17 years old he together with others of his age joined in a body one or other of the two Soldier Societies, the Stars of the Wolves. Each such newly joining group of youths would be incorporated in the larger society of Stars or Wolves, but would keep its own identity through life as a subdivision of the Stars or Wolves, would have its own name (such as Potbellies, Calves, Holding-On-to-Dogs-Tail), and would hang together in common loyalty, protection and helpfulness.[6]

The vower's company, not all the Stars of Wolves, would help him make provision for the Dance, would be in charge of the affair and, during it and only during it, could exercise certain definite authority over other members of the tribe. If the tribe were on the march toward the spot where the dance was about to be held, that company came immediately after the Flat Pipe, according to The Boy, and during the Dance the band chiefs and Pipe keepers stepped aside and yielded to the company the authority to run the camp, compel attendance, give orders, and punish disobedience. If during a Sacred Lodge an individual hunted buffalo out of turn, before the communal hunt began, his lodge would be destroyed, his clothes cut up, and so forth. A like punishment might be meted out to any who might refuse to come into camp, at the time the dance was held.[7]

The two Soldier Societies, the Stars and Wolves, and their respective constituent companies were permanent organizations. The specific individuals who vowed or joined in any given Dance

[5] In 1948, The Boy indicated that probably the Crazy, Dog, Kit-fox and Drum Dances would have been vowed in order, that is, that a man would vow a Dog Dance only if he had been previously a Crazy Dancer, and so on. He was none too sure on this point. He was quite emphatic, however, that any man who belonged to either the Stars or Wolf Men could vow the Sacrifice Dance. [R.F.]

[6] For a description of the whole ceremonial organization, so far as it can be reconstructed, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 36-43.

[7] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 43-44.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 ●624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office.

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter.

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for